



*St. Gabriel's Passionist Parish*

December 2016

My dear Good People,

Greetings of joy and peace in God who is always with us!

A heavily wounded four year-old child rescued by medical officers in Aleppo, Syria asked the doctors whether he is going to die. The doctors groped for words to answer his question. However, they were overtaken by the boy's whimpering caution: "If I die, I will tell God everything!" All the doctors could do is hug him and pour all their expertise to save him.

With so many harrowing events around the world and even in places close to us, we are thrown into states of insecurity and pessimism. In places where tragedies like wars and natural disasters occur, it can be so difficult to continue hoping for goodness in others. Those who are displaced and have to move away from their homes, however, can only force this hope in themselves. They have to carry with them a sustained belief in humanity despite the overwhelming pains and trauma inflicted on them and their helpless children. Providentially, such a belief in humanity is re-affirmed by the warm welcome they receive in our community. The two families who found refuge in our parish have regained strength and optimism as they continue to move on. They find life in this beautiful city of Toronto. I am utterly proud of our community of good people for giving them a new road in life. We have served them God's mercy and compassion in the flesh.

The touch of home we have given to the aforementioned families is even more heartwarming considering that we also have our own struggles. I am one with the families going through difficult times like those losing their loved ones, suffering from any kind of illnesses, coping with financial challenges, or grappling with marital and other relational issues. I am one with all those who may find this Christmas season hard to celebrate. Rest assured, I keep you all in my prayers and masses with the express request that you all deserve to enjoy the graces of peace and abundance brought by the new-born **Christ**. Likewise, we prayerfully echo to the world these glad Christmas tidings especially to our sisters and brothers ravaged by armed conflicts. Our prayers are our priceless contributions to the peacekeeping initiatives going on in these war-torn countries.

In our parish, I cannot be more grateful for the collective vibrancy we shared and put into all programs and activities throughout the year. I thank all the parish volunteers who, on top of their day-to-day preoccupations, are still able to share considerable slices of their time, talent and treasure. My heartfelt gratitude also goes to our generous parishioners. At this, I am encouraging everyone to take part of this communal zest inspired by our patron, St. Gabriel of our Lady of Sorrows. I humbly invite all of you to support our parish ministries and programs like making casseroles for the homeless and supporting our young people in their quest to grow in faith and service to other people.

Above all, being your shepherd, I am restless when my people are troubled. Your difficulties are my difficulties. Your joys are my joys. The **Year of Mercy** may have folded, but our parish community stands amid the boundless and unending mercy of God. Hence, I want to keep you close to my heart in prayer. I have a daily resolution to be your dedicated and committed pastor of our welcoming and beloved parish. I am ever humbled by the task of keeping you in the fold of our **Good Shepherd**, whose birth we celebrate this season. If the season's light and joy elude us because of problems and grief, we need not be afraid to follow the boy who cried "**I will tell God everything.**" With the new-born Christ, I hug you all in prayer and promise with deep faith that God will rescue us all. Thank you for everything and may God bless you all!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Fr. Brando Recaña

### *Christmas Schedule 2016*

CHRISTMAS EVE - Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup>

4:30 PM Vigil Mass – Carol Singing  
7:00 PM Family Mass – Carol Singing  
9:00 PM Adult Choir – Carol Singing  
12:00 AM Midnight Mass – Contemporary Group

Office Open 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM

CHRISTMAS DAY: Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup>

8:30 AM  
10:30 AM  
12:30 PM

Office Open 7:30 AM to 2:00 PM

BOXING DAY: Monday, December 26<sup>th</sup>

No 9:00 AM Mass

Office Closed

Tuesday, December 27<sup>th</sup>

No 9:00 AM Mass

Office Closed

NEW YEAR'S EVE: Saturday, December 31<sup>st</sup>

4:30 PM Vigil Mass – Feast of Mary the Mother of God

Office Open 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM

NEW YEAR'S DAY: Sunday, January 1<sup>st</sup>

8:30 AM  
10:30 AM  
12:30 PM

Office Open 7:30 AM to 2:00 PM

Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>

No 9:00 AM Mass

Office Closed

